THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF FOOD AND MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA): (a) The present pattern of providing financial assistance to the States for handling natural calamities is based on the recommendations of the Tenth Finance Commission. No request has been received for any change in the pattern.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Scheme Relating to Balanced Use of Fertilizers by the Farmers in Bihar

3650. SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have introduced a scheme on balanced and integrated use of fertilizers by the farmers in Bihar in the recent past;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether training programmes have been conducted in the State for education of farmers about balanced use of fertilizers in their fields; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF FOOD AND MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Under the Scheme on Balanced and Integrated Use of Fertilizers, a Central assistance of Rs. 110.85 lakhs has been given to the State of Bihar, during 8th plan for the following:

(i) Strengthening of soil testing laboratories.

(ii) Demonstration of bio-composting.

(iii) Setting up of compost units.

(iv) Awards for use of organic sources of nutrient.

(c) and (d) Central assistance was given to Indian Institute of Soil Science (Indian Council of Agricultural Research) for conducting 32 demonstrations on farmers' field on balanced use of fertilizers during Rabi season of 1996-97 at an estimated cost of Rs. 4.38 lakhs.

Launching of Farm Research Projects in Collaboration with Israel

3651. SHRIMATI JAYANTI PATNAIK: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether some Farm Research Projects are being launched by Government in collaboration with Israel;

(b) if so, whether these Indo-Israel joint projects are being launched in Delhi;

(c) if so, the total land allotted by the Government for this purpose; and

(d) the details of the work undertaken and the amount spent on the Research Project, so far?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF FOOD AND MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

(c) IARI has earmarked a site measuring 17 acres of land for this project.

(d) The work is yet to commence and no expenditure has been incurred so far.

राष्ट्रीय गन्ना नीति बनाया जाना

3652. **श्री नरेन्द्र मोहन:** क्या कृषि मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या सरकार राष्ट्रीय स्तर पर कोई गन्ना नीति बनाने का विचार रखती है;

(ख) क्या यह सच है कि देश के विभिन्न राज्यों में विभिन्न गन्ना नीतियों का अनुसरण किया जा रहा है;

(ग) यदि हां, तो क्या किसानों के हित की रक्षा की जा रही है; और

(घ) यदि नहीं, तो राष्ट्रीय गन्ना नीति बनाने में क्या बाधाएं है?

कृषि मंत्री, खाद्य मंत्री तथा नागरिक अपूर्ति, उपभोक्ता मामले और सार्वजनिक वितरण मंत्री (श्री चतुरानन मिश्र): (क) और (ख) जी नहीं। वर्तमान में राष्ट्रीय या राज्य स्तर पर किसी प्रकार की कोई गन्ना नीति नहीं है।

(ग) केन्द्र एवं राज्य सरकारों द्वारा किए जा रहे विभिन्न उपायों का उद्देश्य गन्ना उत्पादकों के हितों की सुरक्षा करना है। गन्ना के सांविधिक न्यूनतम मूल्य/राज्य द्वारा अनुशंसित मूल्य, जो चीनी मिलों द्वारा भुगतान योग्य होते है, का उद्देश्य गन्ना उत्पादकों को लाभकारी मूल्य दिलाना है। गन्ना आधारित फसल प्रणाली के दीर्घकालीन विकास की केन्द्रीय प्रायोजित योजना के अंतर्गत किसानों को फील्ड प्रदर्शनों एवं कृषक प्रशिक्षणों, उन्नत उपकरणों की आपूर्ति, ड्रिप सिंचाई इकाईयों आदि के माध्यम से, उत्पादन प्रौद्योगिकी के हस्तांतरण में सहायता दी जाती है। विभिन्न राज्य एवं चीनी मिल भी विभिन्न उपायों के माध्यम से किसानों की सहायता कर रहे है।

(घ) यद्यपि गन्ने पर कोई राष्ट्रीय नीति नहीं है, लेकिन इसके प्रतिपादन में किसी बाधा का प्रश्न ही नहीं उठता। वस्तुतः खाद्य मंत्रालय में कृषि क्षेत्र सहित चीनी उद्योग के अध्ययन के लिए एक अन्तर्विभागीय उच्च शक्ति प्राप्त समिति का गठन किया गया है। इसके संदर्भ शर्तों में शामिल है—चीनी उद्योग में वृद्धि एवं विकास के अध्ययन के साथ-साथ चीनी, गन्ना एवं चीनी उद्योग से सम्बद्ध नियमों एवं कानूनों का भी अध्ययन करना एवं वर्तमान नियमों एवं नियंत्रणों में सुधार लाने अथवा उनको समाप्त करने के लिए सुझाव देना, गन्ने की उत्पादकता के साथ-साथ चीनी मिलों के आधुनिकीकरण के माध्यम से उनकी कार्यकुशलता को बढ़ाने के लिए उपायों के बारे में सुझाव देना एवं उत्पादकों को लाभकारी मूल्य दिलाने के संबंध में सुझाव देना।

Cotton Production in Gujarat

3653. SHRI ANANTRAY DEV SHANKER DAVE: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the production of cotton in Gujarat in the current year;

(b) whether there is any fall in the production, if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether it is a fact that there is an all-time record of high cotton prices in Gujarat this year;

(d) whether it is also a fact that the benefit of the high prices has not fully gone to farmers and instead gone to the middlemen and the mill owners; and

(e) if so, the steps Government are taking to protect the interest of farmers in this respect?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF FOOD AND MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA): (a) and (b) The production of cotton in Gujarat in the current year i.e. 1996-97 is expected to be about 28.23 lakh bales of 170 kgs. each which is higher than the production level of 22.01 lakhs bales during 1995-96.

(c) to (e) As a result of increased production/supply, the prices of cotton in Gujarat have declined in the current year as compared to last year but these are ruling well above the minimum support levels benefitting the farmers. Further, the Government has taken various steps to help cotton growers. These include:

(i) The minimum support prices (MSP) of various varieties of cotton were announced before the start of the season.

(ii) Export quota of 12.20 lakh bales of cotton has been released during the current year of which one lakh bales of cotton is allotted to GUJCOT. In addition spill-over quantity of 6.90 lakh bales (approx.) from the export quota of 1995-96 season has been permitted to be exported by 28.2.1997.

(iii) The Cotton Corporation of India (CCI) has been making aggressive purchases to give support to cotton growers. As on 27.3.1997 the CCI purchases in Gujarat during the current season have been 2.39 lakh bales as compared to 1.84 lakh bales as on the corresponding date in the previous year. The CCI and GUJCOT have expoerted 1.69 lakh bales of cotton from Gujarat during the current season. State Marketing Federation and NAFED have